

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel Claims 2-23, amend Claim 1, and add new Claims 24-31 as follows:

1. (Currently amended) A filter ~~Filter~~ element to be used in removal of liquid from solids containing material ~~to be dried in~~, in conjunction with a capillary suction dryer, comprising:

a ceramic internal layer having at least two hollow recess areas for liquid flow, the ceramic internal layer being made of at least one sintered substrate which continuously surrounds the at least two hollow recess areas; and

~~which filter element contains a~~ at least one essentially continuous, separately sintered ceramic microporous surface layer having the a pore size under 5 micrometer micrometers, and supported by a the ceramic internal layer having recess areas for liquid flowing, the microporous surface layer surrounding the ceramic internal layer

~~wherein the internal layer is made of at least one substrate which continuously surrounds at least one recess area and;~~

~~which ceramic internal layer is surrounded by at least one essentially continuous microporous surface layer.~~

2.-23. (Cancelled)

---24. (New) The filter element of claim 1, wherein the microporous layer is made from a ceramic material.---

---25. (New) The filter element of claim 24, wherein the ceramic material is alumina, silicon carbide or titania.---

---26. (New) The filter element of claim 1, wherein the microporous layer is made from a metal, a metal alloy, a polymer or graphite.---

---27. (New) The filter element of claim 1, wherein said recess area has a pre-selected volume that is adapted to optimize flow characteristics of the filter element.---

---28. (New) The filter element of claim 1, wherein the filter element has an optimum bulk volume ratio and wherein said recess area has a pre-selected volume to provide said optimum bulk volume ratio.---

---29. (New) The filter element of claim 1, wherein the filter element has an optimum void volume ratio and wherein said recess area has a pre-selected volume to provide said optimum void volume ratio.---

---30. (New) The filter element of claim 1, wherein the filter element is unitary; and wherein a glue is not used to join pieces of the filter element.---

---31. (New) The filter element of claim 1, wherein the filter element is provided with a fitting area where the substrate of the filter element is in mechanical contact with the capillary suction dryer; and

wherein the fitting area is formed by a recess area that is specifically adapted to mate with the capillary suction dryer.---